

The Senate Higher Education Committee offered the following substitute to HB 243:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

To amend Part 7 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to HOPE scholarships and grants, so as to revise a definition and add a definition; to provide that enrollment in postsecondary courses at a branch of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education will not count against the hourly caps for HOPE grants; to amend Article 2 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to technical and adult education, so as to enact the "Career Academies Act of 2007"; to provide for legislative intent; to provide for definitions; to provide for the disbursement of funds by the State Board of Technical and Adult Education for career academies established as charter schools; to provide for a matching requirement; to provide for eligibility criteria; to provide for an annual report; to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Part 7 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to HOPE scholarships and grants, is amended by adding a new paragraph (5.1) and revising paragraph (7) of Code Section 20-3-519, relating to definitions regarding HOPE scholarships and grants, as follows:

"(5.1) 'Dual credit enrollment' means enrollment by a student in a postsecondary course in which an agreement has been established between an eligible high school and an eligible postsecondary institution wherein the student earns Carnegie units of credit that count toward both high school graduation requirements and postsecondary coursework requirements."

"(7) 'Eligible postsecondary institution' means a school which is:

(A) A unit of the University System of Georgia;

(B) A branch of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education ~~or an affiliated institution which is controlled by a local board of education;~~

(C) A private independent nonprofit postsecondary institution eligible for tuition equalization grants in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) of Code Section 20-3-411; or

(D) A private proprietary postsecondary institution eligible for tuition equalization grants in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (C) of paragraph (2) of Code Section 20-3-411."

SECTION 2.

Said part is further amended by revising subsection (e) of Code Section 20-3-519.5, relating to eligibility for HOPE grants at a branch of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education, as follows:

"(e) No student may receive HOPE grants for more than 95 quarter hours or 63 semester hours of attempted coursework, except as provided for in subsection (f) of this Code section. No student may receive more than a cumulative total of 190 quarter hours or 127 semester hours of combined HOPE scholarships and grants, unless in accordance with Code Sections 20-3-519.2 and 20-3-519.3. For purposes of this subsection, attempted hours shall not include hours for courses taken ~~pursuant to Code Section 20-2-161.1~~ and paid for by a HOPE grant while a student is participating in dual credit enrollment with both an eligible high school and a branch of the Department of Technical and Adult Education or a unit of the University System of Georgia. The Department of Technical and Adult Education or the University System of Georgia, as applicable, shall verify that the student is enrolled in an eligible high school and shall notify the Georgia Student Finance Commission of the student's participation in dual credit enrollment."

SECTION 3.

Article 2 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to technical and adult education, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as follows:

"20-4-37.

(a) This Code section shall be known and may be cited as the 'Career Academies Act of 2007.'

(b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to increase graduation rates, potential job opportunities, and educational opportunities for students by establishing and providing start-up funds for career academies through the partnership of technical colleges and local boards of education.

(c) As used in this Code section, the term:

(1) 'Board' means the State Board of Technical and Adult Education.

(2) 'Career academy' means a specialized charter school established by a partnership between a local board of education, or a group of local boards of education, in cooperation with a local technical college and approved by the State Board of Education in accordance with Article 31 of Chapter 2 of this title.

(3) 'Charter petitioner' means a local board of education, or a group of local boards of education, in cooperation with a local technical college which have partnered to establish a career academy as a charter school pursuant to Article 31 of Chapter 2 of this title.

(4) 'Charter school' shall have the same meaning as in paragraph (3) of Code Section 20-2-2062.

(5) 'Local technical college' means a local technical school, college, or institute under the auspices of the Department of Technical and Adult Education.

(d) The board shall be authorized to disburse funds, subject to appropriations or other available funding, to career academies for start-up costs.

(e) A charter petitioner for a career academy that has submitted or that has drafted for submission a charter petition for a career academy to the State Board of Education for approval shall be authorized to submit to the board an application for start-up funds. The board shall approve applications for start-up funds for career academies that meet the criteria and requirements, subject to appropriations or other available funding, established pursuant to subsection (h) of this Code section. Funds shall not be released to an approved applicant unless the charter petition is approved by the State Board of Education pursuant to Article 31 of Chapter 2 of this title.

(f) The board shall also be authorized to disburse funds, subject to appropriations or other available funding, to existing charter career academies which demonstrate a need for supplemental funding.

(g) The board shall establish a matching requirement for recipients of funds under this Code section.

(h) The board shall establish eligibility criteria, requirements, and procedures for the disbursement of funding to charter academies pursuant to this Code section. Such criteria, requirements, and procedures shall provide that the board shall consider the strength of the proposed partnership between the local board of education, or the group of local boards of education, and the local technical college as well as the active support of the local business community for the career academy.

(i) A career academy receiving funds pursuant to this Code section shall submit an annual report to the board regarding the expenditure of the funds received pursuant to this Code section."

SECTION 4.

This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

SECTION 5.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.